

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 ACDA-05 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00

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NEA-10 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4661

INFO SECDEF

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USMISSION NATO

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16TH AF TORREJON CV

JUSMG MAAG SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1282

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SP, US

SUBJ: THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION--

FURTHER PUBLIC SPANISH REACTION

REF: MADRID 0845

SUMMARY: BEYOND THE INITIAL RUSH OF PUBLIC REACTIONS TO THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION (REFTEL), RELATIVELY LITTLE MEDIA ATTENTION HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO IT. THE SEVERAL CRITICAL COMMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS RECENTLY ARE OF SOME INTEREST, IN PART BECAUSE THEY ARE BALANCED BETWEEN RIGHT AND LEFT. CRITICISM OF THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PACKAGE VOICED IN PRIVATE BY VARIOUS SPANISH MILITARY LEADERS, PARTICULARLY IN THE NAVY AND TO SOME EXTENT IN THE ARMY, HAS NOT BEEN AIRED IN PUBLIC. TO THE SPANISH PUBLIC IN GENERAL, THE TREATY DOES NOT

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AT THIS TIME SEEM TO STAND HIGH ON THE LIST OF PRIORITIES DEMANDING

ATTENTION. END SUMMARY.

1. ONE OF THE MORE INTERESTING PUBLIC STATEMENTS REGARDING THE TREATY, AND ONE OF THE MORE NEGATIVE TO DATE, CAME LAST WEEK FROM A FLEDGLING FALANGIST-ORIENTED POLITICAL PARTY (FALANGE ESPANOLA DE LAS J.O.N.S.) WHICH ISSUED A POLITICAL PLATFORM WHICH INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING: "SPAIN SHOULD REMAIN NEUTRAL... THE TREATY BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES SHOULD NOT BE RENEWED SINCE IT CONTRIBUTES TO THE DANGER OF THE UNLEASHING OF A CONFLICT AMONG IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES AND PLACED IN JEOPARDY THE SURVIVAL OF SPANIARDS AND OF ALL MANKIND..."

2. THE ONLY OTHER PROMINENT PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE TREATY BY A NON-COMMUNIST POLITICAL PARTY OR GROUP REMAINS THAT OF THE PSOE (SOCIALIST), ISSUED ABOUT THE TIME OF THE SIGNING, WHICH, WHILE NEGATIVE, WAS RATHER RESTRAINED. THE SPANISH PRESS HAS NOW ALSO REPORTED THAT TWO SUPPOSED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JUNTA DEMOCRATICA (OF WHICH THE COMMUNIST PCE IS THE MOST PROMINENT MEMBER) RECENTLY PARTICIPATED IN A REUNION OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE IN NEW YORK AND STATED ON THAT OCCASION THAT THE JUNTA IS NOT AGAINST THE TREATY ITSELF BUT AGAINST THE FORM IN WHICH IT WAS ACCOMPLISHED. RATIFICATION, THEY REPORTEDLY ADDED, CAN ONLY PREJUDICE THE FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES, IN PART SINCE THE TREATY IS INTERPRETED AS PROVIDING CONDITIONAL U.S. SUPPORT FOR THIS SPANISH GOVT.

3. THE NEGATIVE RESPONSE OF SOME FALANGISTS IS NOT SURPRISING SINCE THEIR HOPE FOR CONTINUED POLITICAL INFLUENCE IS TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT A FUNCTION OF SPANISH ISOLATION. THE RESTRAINT WHICH CONTINUES TO BE SHOWN IN PUBLIC IN CRITICIZING THIS TREATY BY THOSE TO THE LEFT OF CENTER WHO HAD BEEN CONSISTENT CRITICS OF OUR BASE ARRANGEMENTS REFLECTS THEIR RECOGNITION THAT THE TREATY REINFORCES THE SPANISH GOVT'S ABILITY TO MOVE TOWARD REFORM. AS ONE SOCIALIST INTELLECTUAL RECENTLY EXPLAINED TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER, THE SUPPORT ACCORDED THE SPANISH MILITARY BY THE TREATY IS OBJECTIONABLE BUT THE LEVERAGE FOR POLITICAL CHANGE PROVIDED BY IT IS MORE IMPORTANT AT THIS MOMENT. HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES HOPED, THEREFORE, THAT RATIFICATION WOULD NOT COME TOO SOON, IDEALLY NOT BEFORE JULY.

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4. ALSO NOTEWORTHY IS THE REPORT RELEASED LAST WEEK OF THE RESULTS OF A RECENT QUASI-OFFICIAL PUBLIC OPINION POLL INDICATING THAT 44 PERCENT OF THE SPANIARDS ASKED WHETHER THEY APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED OF THE TREATY OFFERED NO OPINION. ROUGHLY 1/3 OF THOSE ASKED, INCLUDING MOST OF THE BETTER-INFORMED RESPONDENTS, APPROVED. THIRTY-FOUR PERCENT OF THE RESPONDENTS ALSO ABSTAINED WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN SPAIN WERE OF MORE BENEFIT TO THE UNITED STATES OR TO SPAIN, WHILE 32 PERCENT

BELIEVED THEM TO BE OF MORE VALUE TO THE UNITED STATES.

5. AT THIS JUNCTURE, ISSUES OTHER THAN THE TREATY AND THE BASES ARE CLEARLY MORE IMPORTANT FOR MOST SPANIARDS. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT SIGNIFICANT CRITICAL OPINION COULD NOT BE MOBILIZED BY POLITICAL LEADERS, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF LATENT OPPOSITION TO A PROMINENT FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE IN SPAIN. (THE NEGATIVE PUBLIC REACTIONS IN ZARAGOZA TO THE PLACEMENT THERE OF KC-135 TANKER AIRCRAFT, REINFORCED RECENTLY BY THE CRASH OF SUCH AN AIRCRAFT NEAR GUADALAJARA, SPEAK TO THIS POINT.)
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